



feeding MATTERS

Winter Newsletter



“ We can never give up.
We don't believe in giving up. ”

A Message From THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In an effort to embrace and honor our Food Bank value of Diversity, we host quarterly “Lunch and Learns” for our staff. Community members are invited to share their stories. They are always well-received, and we learn a great deal from our guests. In December, three Lincoln Public Schools Champions joined us to present their perspectives as professionals in low-income neighborhood schools. Joining us were counselor Lisa Mischke and social worker Tina Bouma from Park Middle School and West Lincoln principal Scott Schwartz.

Their candid conversation with our staff was touching, gut-wrenching and inspiring. Our communities are asking so much from our school systems, and the professionals in our school buildings are facing, at times, what must be overwhelming challenges. Our LPS Champions are resilient. They believe in our community's children. At one point, Lisa said, “We can never give up. I don't believe in giving up.”

These words resonated with the Food Bank staff. At times, poverty and hunger issues overwhelm the most resilient among us. In those times, we turn to our colleagues, our board, our volunteers, our agencies and our donors. We turn to our Champions like Lisa, Tina, and Scott. The people we serve are resilient. Our partners are resilient. We must be as well.

In 2017, your Food Bank is committed to growing our existing services and to seeking innovative answers to age-old problems. New questions need to be asked, and new answers are needed.

With your ongoing friendship, we will find some of those answers. Thank you for lending the Food Bank a hand in fulfilling its mission: Alleviate Hunger in Southeast Nebraska.

We can never give up. We don't believe in giving up.

Best regards,

Scott Young
Executive Director
Food Bank of Lincoln



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What's important to you as a Food Bank of Lincoln supporter is important to us. As a donor, we want you to have full confidence in the Food Bank, our mission and our practices. According to the Donor Bill of Rights, your expectations of us should include:

- To have access to the organization's most recent financial statements
- To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition.
- To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by law.

If you have any questions about how your donor dollars are being used, please call us at 402.466.8170.

The Donor Bill of Rights was developed by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, the Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Non-Profits and other top consultants to non-profits. Look for more from the Donor Bill of Rights in future newsletters.

Faces of Hunger: Kala's Story

The only thing consistent about Kala's childhood was that her surroundings frequently changed. She grew up in poverty. Kala and her mom moved around quite a bit as her mother looked for work. They lived in four different states and more than eight communities. In some ways, Kala's ability to adapt is what has helped her navigate the hardships she's faced so far in her relatively young life.



Admittedly, not all of her choices have been good ones. Kala got involved with people who did drugs, and soon, she was addicted. In an attempt to help her daughter get her life back on track, Kala's mother made a "tough love" decision, which left Kala homeless for a period of time.

"I wish I could take all of it back," Kala said. "I lost everything. It's not who I wanted to be, but those were the decisions I made at the time, and I have to live with them."

Something came from that troubled time, and it ultimately helped Kala turn her life around; the birth of her son. "He is my everything," she said, referring to her now 1-year-old son Jace. Although being a single mother is difficult, Kala said she never considers being Jace's mother a hardship.

"There are times when I get overwhelmed as a single parent and the expense of it, but my every reason for getting up every day is my son," Kala said.

Kala worked as a certified nursing assistant, but the hours for the job didn't mesh with childcare. Now she works as many hours as she can as a dishwasher at a restaurant in York. She has reunited with her mother, and Kala is drug-free. "It's amazing to me that [the Food Bank of Lincoln] comes all the way [to Stromsburg] to ensure people in small communities like this have help," Kala said. As she looked at the food going home with her to her apartment, Kala was already putting together recipes she can make for herself and Jace; recipes that will help the food stretch into as many meals as possible for the month. "Thank you for this. I really do appreciate the help, and I hope you will tell your donors that," she said. When asked what she hoped for her son, Kala quickly stated her answer. "I want him to be the best person he can be. I want Jace to go to college. I want to do everything I can to make sure he doesn't follow my footsteps."

Although not every step Kala has taken has been a "good" one, she's certainly moving in the right direction. That is in part because of donors who believe in the Food Bank's programs and who believe young parents like Kala and her son Jace deserve to make better lives for themselves.

Donor Profile: Kathleen Grossman

Two little girls wearing sparkly shoes and fancy dresses. That's how Kathleen Grossman's favorite Empty Bowls memory begins.

Kathleen, who is the owner and head instructor at Down Under Pottery, has been involved with the Food Bank of Lincoln's annual Empty Bowls event from the very start. She has a colossal library of Empty Bowls memories, but she will never forget those shoes.

"As the crowd was gathering at the event in 2015," she said, "I looked out and saw a mother with her daughters. Her daughters were wearing sparkly shoes and their Sunday best. They were dressed for a party, and it caught my eye. It was just adorable."

As the event was winding down, that mother and her daughters stopped to thank Kathleen for her role in the annual event and extend their gratitude.

"That mother shared with me that her family relied on the Food Bank for the last five years; that they couldn't have made it without that support," said Kathleen, a mother of three and grandmother of one. "That brief exchange reinforced why I love this event and why I'm involved,"

Involved is quite an understatement. In the last 14 years, Kathleen and her students have created 11,300 bowls for this event. While the cost of materials is estimated at about \$8,475 the reality is those bowls have helped the Food Bank raise more than \$775,000 which turns into 2,325,000 meals for food insecure people in Southeast Nebraska. "Kathleen is a shining example of the community of friends of the Food Bank that say 'Yes' to feeding hungry folks," Food Bank Executive Director Scott Young

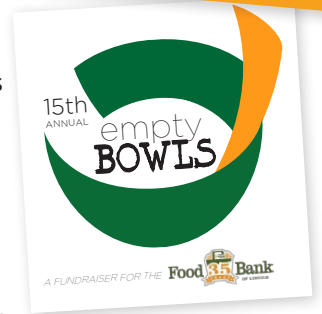


said. "Whether through art, volunteer time, or dollars, people like Kathleen are our community's real heroes in the fight against hunger and poverty."

"Nothing else in the world I could do would have the effect that my involvement with Empty Bowls does," said Kathleen. "I love the craft, and I love to raise awareness for feeding the hungry. I'm proud to do something for my community. I can't write a big check, but I can do this, which becomes a big check. It just makes me feel good."

Kathleen is humble, and while she has never asked or expected awards or praise, the most meaningful recognition she has ever received certainly sparkled.

May 30, 2017



MEET THE STAFF



Ryan Meyer, Distribution Center Assistant

As a Distribution Center Assistant, Ryan pulls orders for Agency Partners and prepares food going on trucks for mobile food distributions. Ryan also helps check product into inventory when we receive donations from grocery stores and individual donors. "I've had an opportunity to go out to some mobile food distributions recently, and it reinforces my work. Although I'm mostly a behind-the-scenes guy, I know

I'm doing my part in the food distribution chain," said Ryan. "It's a good feeling to be at a distribution and see people who are leaving happy and smiling because now they have food."

When he's not at work, Ryan enjoys playing golf and PlayStation, although with a 15-month-old daughter his priorities and free time have changed. Ryan and his wife Shelli enjoy dining out, but these days, the couple eats more meals at home. "My wife and I enjoy cooking together. Usually, she will find a recipe on Pinterest and we'll try it out at home."



Pedro Hernandez, Route Driver

When Pedro Hernandez was in his early 20's, he left El Salvador. The country was in the midst of civil war, which lasted from 1980-1992. El Salvador is located in Central America and is bordered by the North Pacific Ocean, Guatemala and Honduras.

Although he loves his home country, Pedro wanted a better life. He immigrated to Los Angeles, Calif., where he met Raquel. The couple eventually married. While in LA, Pedro navigated packed streets and bustling expressways as a tour bus driver.

LA was his home for nearly 30 years, but as gang violence increased, Pedro and Raquel yearned for a quieter life for themselves and their growing family.

Nebraska's slower pace and family oriented feel enticed them to move east toward "The Good Life." It's where the couple continued to raise three children and where they welcomed a fourth. They've been Lincolnites for going on 10 years and enjoy it, despite the sometimes "very cold" temperatures. While Pedro misses El Salvador, he does not miss the constant fear for his family's safety. When asked where to find good El Salvadorian food in Lincoln, Pedro suggested Tia Lety's, located on N. 27th St.

A Year of Milestones

This is a milestone year for the Food Bank and some of our best-known events. August 16 officially marks our 35th year in operation. In 1983, the Food Bank's first full year of operation, the Food Bank of Lincoln connected people to 317,170 meals. During the 2016 fiscal year, we connected people to 9,605,773 meals. It's important to reflect on these milestones. We'll celebrate by doing more of what really matters: putting food on tables through mobile food distributions, Child Hunger programs, collaboration with Agency Partners, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program certification efforts.

This year, we will also celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Backpack Extra Mile Walk on Saturday, April 29. This event could not—and would not—be possible without the dedicated partnership between Lincoln Public Schools and the Food Bank of Lincoln. This is the single-largest fundraising event for the Food Bank of Lincoln. In that first school year of the Extra Mile Walk, there were 10,602 Lincoln Public Schools kids enrolled in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program. This school year, there are 18,014 kids in the free and reduced lunch program; an increase of 7,502 kids.

On May 13, Stamp Out Hunger, a service area-wide food and fundraising collaboration with the U.S. Postal Service and United Way, turns 25! Then, on May 30, we celebrate 15 years of the Empty Bowls luncheon, our signature fundraising event. In its first year, Empty Bowls was held at a venue with barely enough seating for 200 people. As we prepare for this year's event, we anticipate 1,200 luncheon attendees. Tickets for Empty Bowls go on sale March 31, so be sure to visit our website www.lincolnfoodbank.org to get yours!

Each of these milestones is a humble reminder of our work, and of the generous support we receive from you, our donors. Your support improves a child's chances of getting ahead in life without the distraction of a grumbling tummy. Your support helps hard-working adults rest a little easier and reduces the risk of accident or injury caused by anxiety and stress. Your support brings comfort to a family whose stability is rattled by medical illness.

Whether you are a first-time donor or have been devoted to this cause since the '80s, thank you for being a part of our story and helping us in the mission to alleviate hunger in Southeast Nebraska.



MARK YOUR Calendar

March 21 State Campaign Against Hunger - Coordinators' Kickoff

April 3-14 State Campaign Against Hunger

April 29 10th annual Backpack Extra Mile Walk

May 13 Postal Drive (Stamp Out Hunger)

May 18 Give to Lincoln Day

May 30 Empty Bowls Luncheon

CHILD HUNGER HEROES

We are grateful for these donors, who provide \$2,500 or more annually to support our Child Hunger programs:

Abel Foundation
Mary Arth
Celerion
College View Seventh-day Adventist Church
Community Health Endowment
M Eighmy Foundation
Stephen and Kathy Dickey
LPS Extra Mile Walk – Shari Styskal
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Art and Chris Zygielbaum



If you are interested in becoming a Child Hunger Hero, please contact John Mabry at jmabry@lincolnfoodbank.org or (402) 466-8170, ext. 110.



HOURS
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday through Friday

LOCATION
4840 Doris Bair Circle, Suite A
(next to Doris Bair softball complex)

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Lincoln, NE 68504

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